UNITED NATIONS

TCDC

Technical co-operation among developing countries

Distr.
GENERAL

TCDC/7/10
10 April 1991

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

HIGH-LEVEL COMMITTEE ON THE REVIEW
OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES
Seventh session
New York, 28-31 May 1991

VIEWS OF THE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM ON THE REPORT OF THE GROUP OF GOVERNMENTAL EXPERTS ON THE RULES, REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES OF THE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM CONCERNING TCDC

Report by the Administrator of UNDP

SUMMARY

In its decision 90/43, the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme requested comments from the organizations of the United Nations development system on the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on the rules, regulations, and procedures of the organizations concerning TCDC. The report had been submitted to the Governing Council at its thirty-seventh session in response to decision 6/3 of the High-level Committee.

The comments which are summarized in the present report address the recommendations made by the expert group for action by the organizations aimed at the promotion of awareness of TCDC, increasing financing for TCDC, revisions in their internal policies and procedures concerning TCDC, and the expansion of data and information on developing countries' capacities.

The Committee's attention is drawn to section C below, which contains the Administrator's conclusions.

INTRODUCTION

1. The High-level Committee in its decision 6/3, paragraph 15, requested the Administrator to organize

> "a meeting of technical co-operation experts of interested countries in order to identify clearly the impediments to technical co-operation among developing countries and changes to be introduced, so as to enable the incorporation of technical co-operation among developing countries into all programmes and projects financed by the United Nations system, and to recommend, as far as possible, revisions of the existing rules, regulations and procedures necessary for the purpose by the relevant governing bodies of the technical co-operation agencies of the United Nations system".

2. The group of 13 governmental experts, drawn from both developed and developing countries, in consultation with the geographic regional groups at the United Nations in New York, held their meeting in New York from 9 to 20 April 1990 (annex I below contains the list of experts). Their report (DP/1990/77) was submitted to the Governing Council of UNDP at its thirty-seventh session as requested by the High-level Committee in paragraph 16 of its decision 6/3. In its decision 90/43, the Governing Council took note of the report and invited the organizations of the United Nations development system to express their views on the findings and recommendations of the report and to submit them to the High-level Committee for consideration at its seventh session. It further decided to review the report at its thirty-eighth session in the light of the views of the organizations, and of the High-level Committee. The comments, which follow, address the specific recommendations made by the Group of Governmental Experts for action by the organizations, and include reactions of the organizations to these recommendations. Of the organizations invited to comment, 21 provided their submissions as of 2 February 1991. 1/ The comments of the organizations appear in full in addendum 1 to the present report. UNDP's reactions are comprehensively contained in this report. This report is divided into three sections: (a) general reactions; (b) views on specific recommendations in the report of the Group of Experts; (c) conclusions and recommendations.

A. GENERAL REACTIONS

3. Most organizations have indicated their general endorsement of the main findings and recommendations of the report. Several of them also viewed the report as a valuable assessment of current constraints to the widespread use of TCDC. Several agencies made additional observations and these views are also reflected in this document.

4. Some organizations stressed that TCDC should not be seen in a vacuum. For instance, the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations (UNCTC) pointed out that greater economic cooperation among developing countries will

make possible a greater scope for technical cooperation. UNCTC further observed that certain development banks and financial agencies thus far had placed insufficient emphasis on TCDC. Habitat voiced the view that TCDC has to be flexible enough to respond readily to specialized needs of Governments.

5. The reactions of the organizations to recommendations 52 to 70 of the report of the Group of Governmental Experts, which call for actions by the organizations, are briefly discussed below.

B. ACTION BY THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

1. Promotion of awareness and improvement of information on TCDC

Experts' recommendation 53

> "The staff of UNDP and other relevant organizations of the United Nations development system should be given adequate training in TCDC concepts and methods."

Comments by organizations

6. UNDP is in the process of developing staff training programmes in TCDC concepts and procedures. ILO has suggested that training and orientation workshops on TCDC be organized within agencies to achieve a greater understanding and will discuss with UNDP arrangements to implement training. FAO has reported undertaking many activities to promote awareness of TCDC and has plans for seminars for headquarters staff and regular briefings for focal points and field office staff. UNIDO regards adequate training of United Nations officials as a key to alleviating attitudinal barriers to the use of TCDC and integrating TCDC in regular programmes and activities. UNITAR has made a number of training proposals including the practical suggestion to introduce the TCDC concept into such existing training activities as the Programme on Management of Field Coordination for Senior United Nations System Representatives. According to the World Food Council, priority should be given to the need "to adequately demonstrate the unique features of cost effectiveness and sustainability of TCDC operations".

7. A number of United Nations agencies also recognize the need to develop networks of information related to their areas of expertise. WHO and DTCD report having begun the process of establishing such information networks. UNIDO endorses the publication by the Special Unit for TCDC of a planners' handbook as well as a brochure on TCDC for more general use. FAO is preparing a handbook on TCDC and regularly publishes a TCDC newsletter.

Experts' recommendation 54

> "Field offices of UNDP should upgrade their competence and capacity in effectively deploying TCDC in country programming, by making it a

priority responsibility of resident representatives to improve information flows to Governments of developing countries on the potential for TCDC, and to train national focal points on TCDC matters."

Comments by organizations

8. With its planned training programme, UNDP will focus on upgrading the competence and capacity of field offices and the training of national TCDC focal points. (See also reply to recommendation 53, as well as replies to recommendations 69 on project cycle and 58 on focal points.)

Experts' recommendation 55

"Organizations of the United Nations system should facilitate the fielding by developing countries of technical missions to other developing countries as an important instrument for expanding the scope of TCDC. Whenever project formulation activity commences with a preparatory mission, should the Government so require, arrangements should be made to include developing country experts in such missions so as to facilitate the consideration of TCDC approaches for the implementation of the project."

Comments by organizations

9. Few agency replies have discussed technical missions. Both FAO and the United Nations Volunteers programme have pointed out that, since a majority of their experts are from developing countries, the TCDC context is given attention and use of TCDC options at the project formulation stage is encouraged. As part of the mainstreaming of TCDC into the country programming process, UNDP will place greater emphasis on fielding technical missions from institutions of developing countries. However, UNDP's considerable experience in engaging individual experts from developing countries has not necessarily by itself expanded TCDC. (See also commments on recommendations 63 to 65 on policies and procedures.) Several organizations have also indicated that they are examining their policies and procedures in this regard.

Experts' recommendation 56

"UNDP should undertake the publication of information on capacities and needs of developing countries for TCDC by country and by sector in order to assist developing countries in identifying opportunities for TCDC through regular UNDP public information publications."

Comments by organizations

10. UNDP is considering including such information in its regular public information publications, in addition to the TCDC newsletter started in 1991.

Experts' recommendation 57

"In addition to the Planner's Handbook on TCDC currently under preparation, the Special Unit for TCDC of UNDP should also produce a brochure in the appropriate languages for widespread dissemination of the concept, potential and usefulness of TCDC, stressing the opportunities for cost savings and for optimizing the use of IPF resources."

Comments by organizations

11. UNDP is planning the publication of such a brochure.

2. Focal points

Experts' recommendation 58

"UNDP should assist Governments of developing countries upon request in the establishment or strengthening of national focal points for TCDC. UNDP should give special recognition to the particular needs of those countries, whose economic circumstances and institutional weakness would make it difficult to give necessary priority to TCDC. UNDP should provide, where necessary, human and financial resources to these countries to ensure their effective participation in TCDC activities."

Comments by organizations

12. UNDP will continue to assist Governments of developing countries at their request, in setting up or strengthening their national TCDC focal point mechanisms, including training of national officials in TCDC concepts and methods, and the installation of decentralized INRES-South facilities in those countries.

Experts' recommendation 59

"Organizations of the United Nations development system should set up or strengthen, as appropriate, their focal points for TCDC."

Comments by organizations

13. Most organizations have reported having established or designated their TCDC focal points. FAO, for example, indicates that its focal point briefs all outgoing programme officers and country representatives. IFAD has reported that it is setting up a focal point, in response to this recommendation. The status of the strengthening of UNDP's Special Unit for TCDC is provided in another report before the Committee. (TCDC/7/8, Measures to facilitate TCDC - staffing of the Special Unit for TCDC). The focal points of the organizations are listed in the UNDP Directory of Focal Points issued by the Special Unit for TCDC, which is updated periodically.

Experts' recommendation 60

"Organizations of the United Nations system should co-operate with Governments' efforts to increase substantially UNDP expenditures for TCDC modalities in regional, interregional and global projects of the fifth programming cycle."

Comments by organizations

14. UNDP has reported that during the 1987-1988 biennium, 37.1 per cent of the regional IPFs and 25 per cent of the interregional and global IPFs supported TCDC activities. This trend is expected to continue during the fifth cycle especially as programmes increasingly take into account Governing Council decision 90/34, which specifies TCDC as one of six areas of focus for UNDP programmes. UNIDO observed that TCDC financing is the primary responsibility of the developing countries and that while IPFs could be used for foreign exchange costs, local financing for in-country costs should be used to the maximum extent possible and that private sector participation should be encouraged.

15. Several agencies offered the following views on financing. United Nations development system-financed programmes are usually a small part of the total development activity of a country. Thus, Governments, in their search for TCDC funding, should also look outside the United Nations system, with increasing attention to the private sector, development banks, and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. New ideas, such as triangular arrangements (two cooperating Governments and one bilateral financing institution) should be tested. It is also suggested that special budgetary provisions for TCDC such as a national fund should be established by the Government, to facilitate the financing of TCDC activities by sectoral ministries and other entities in the country.

Experts' recommendation 61

"The Special Unit for TCDC of UNDP should continue to compile and disseminate information on all available sources of financing for TCDC."

Comments by organizations

16. UNDP supports the idea of regularly updating data on financing TCDC, and will continue the process of updating the Directory on Potential Resources for Financing TCDC Activities, issued by the Special Unit for TCDC.

Experts' recommendation 62

"UNDP and other organizations of the United Nations development system should continue to simplify, where appropriate, its financial procedures governing TCDC projects."

Comments by organizations

17. Most organizations report that they have taken note of this recommendation and are conscious of the need to revise financial procedures concerning TCDC. Some agencies indicated that they are awaiting UNDP's lead in this direction. While UNDP has endeavoured to streamline its financial procedures governing TCDC projects in the past few years, it is discussing with the organizations the possibility of further improving procedures relating to the reporting of expenditures on TCDC project budgets. (See also response to recommendation 64.)

3. Policies and procedures in the organizations of the United Nations system

Experts' recommendation 63

> "Pursuant to recommendation 33 of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries and decision 6/3 of the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries, UNDP should bring TCDC into the mainstream of its programme by placing the main responsibilities for application of TCDC modality in country programming on resident co-ordinators and revising its Programme and Projects Manual accordingly prior to the initiation of the fifth programming cycle."

Comments by organizations

18. The Governing Council has placed increased emphasis on TCDC as one of the six main focus areas for the fifth cycle. In line with this, the mainstreaming of TCDC is being addressed in the programming of UNDP core assistance in the fifth cycle particularly. The country programming process will increasingly become the frame of reference within which TCDC activities can be initiated.

Experts' recommendation 64

> "The programme and projects manuals or equivalent documents of every organization should be systematically reviewed and suitably amended, where necessary, to include consideration of TCDC alternatives in the process of identification, formulation, appraisal and approval of every development project supported by the organizations."

Comments by organizations

19. As mentioned, in response to the previous recommendation, in accordance with the new procedures being developed for mainstreaming the six areas of focus specified in decision 90/34 of the Governing Council (WID, UNV, etc.) including TCDC in the country programmes, the UNDP Policies and Procedures Manual will be revised in due course. A number of United Nations

organizations indicated that their policies and procedures for TCDC were under review, some of them dependent on UNDP's lead in this regard. The World Food Council advocated expanding the mandate of the Special Unit for TCDC, to help it to become a clearing-house for project ideas. The functions of the Special Unit, as mandated by the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, and endorsed by the General Assembly, accommodate this point of view.

Experts' recommendation 65

> "Pursuant to the provisions of paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution 42/180 of 11 December 1987, the Resident Co-ordinator should carry the responsibility of assisting Governments with all necessary elements for their decision on the method of executing each UNDP-supported project concerning the total or partial use of TCDC modalities."

Comments by organizations

20. This recommendation will be implemented through various measures already described, bearing in mind that the ultimate decision for utilizing TCDC modalities rests with the Governments of developing countries themselves.

Experts' recommendation 66

> "Similar responsibility should be assigned to the field representatives of the specialized agencies in respect of projects being supported from non-UNDP sources of financing."

Comments by organizations

21. Many organizations have indicated that they have taken note of this recommendation and should be able to report the progress in its implementation at subsequent sessions of the Committee.

Experts' recommendation 67

> "The Special Unit for TCDC at UNDP headquarters and the TCDC focal points at headquarters of other organizations of the United Nations system should be fully associated with the processes of formulation of policies and appraisal and approval of projects."

Comments by organizations

22. UNDP has an Inter-Bureaux Standing Committee on TCDC, convened by the Director, Special Unit for TCDC, and attended by the deputy heads of bureaux and other offices. It reviews problems encountered in using TCDC modalities in the process of project formulation and implementation in the field.

23. The Special Unit for TCDC is increasingly and directly involved in the substantive programming processes at UNDP headquarters and is, for instance, participating in committees responsible for headquarters project appraisal and approval (Action Committee and Project Appraisal Committee). Consideration is being given to the proposal of involving the Special Unit in committees and task forces concerned with policy issues.

Experts' recommendation 68

> "The TCDC Information Referral System - INRES-South - should be extensively used by the resident representatives of UNDP and, whenever necessary, by the organizations of the United Nations development system in identifying suitable developing country institutions for obtaining project inputs at the project formulation stage. Detailed information on the institutions so identified should be promptly provided to the respective local authorities for the exercise of choice for selection. Where necessary, short exploratory missions to selected institutions should be fielded to enable the national authorities at both ends to review the project proposals and to discuss mutually agreeable terms for co-operation in the formulation and execution of the project. The competent United Nations organizations should facilitate these efforts whenever so required by national authorities."

Comments by organizations

24. INRES-South will be extensively used in the process of mainstreaming TCDC in the country programming process as described earlier. INRES-South is actively engaged in decentralizing its database through the establishment of locations in the field as well as at UNIDO and FAO, through training and information efforts including a newsletter and regularly published articles. (See also reply to recommendation 56).

Experts' recommendation 69

> "Organizations of the United Nations system, particularly specialized agencies, in compliance with the relevant decisions of their governing bodies in supporting and promoting TCDC, should exercise the following roles in formulating and implementing projects:
>
> "(a) Assistance to national authorities and to the resident representatives of UNDP in identifying suitable developing country institutions for obtaining project inputs in their respective fields of competence;
>
> "(b) Assistance in preparing TCDC project proposals and in drafting project documents;
>
> "(c) Assistance in implementing projects or those components of the projects for which suitable capacities in developing country institutions may have not been identified, upon request by national authorities;

"(d) Assistance in evaluating project implementation mid-stream during the life of the project, and project results upon completion of the projects;

"(e) Dissemination of information on project experience gained in developing countries through workshops, orientation seminars and publications;

"(f) Assistance to national authorities in identifying sources of financing for projects or for activities stemming from the implementation of projects."

Comments by organizations

25. (a) Several organizations have indicated that they are expanding and developing their information networks for this purpose.

(b) While UNDP will continue with efforts to promote TCDC at the project identification stage, it will also be beneficial to introduce this awareness at the programming level.

(c) Several organizations indicated that they have taken note of this recommendation.

(d) The same organizations indicated their preparedness to assist Governments in evaluating the implementation of their TCDC projects at their request.

(e) Most agencies indicated readiness to provide information to Governments on project experiences in developing countries.

(f) Some organizations indicated that efforts are being made in this regard. (See also comments on recommendation 56 on information and recommendations 60 and 61 on financing.)

Experts' recommendation 70

"The Special Unit for TCDC should continue to convene meetings of the TCDC focal points of the organizations on an annual basis, and preferably before the regular sessions of the Governing Council of UNDP."

Comments by organizations

26. The Special Unit for TCDC is continuing to convene annual meetings of TCDC focal points of United Nations organizations.

Experts' recommendation 52

"The definition and scope of TCDC should be reviewed and elucidated in a wider sense in the light of experience gained and the decisions

taken by the Governing Council of UNDP and the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries since the adoption in 1978 of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries, taking into account the need to make a clear distinction between TCDC and the traditional mode of technical co-operation."

Comments by organizations

27. Organizations have generally shared the experts' view that there is a need to review and clarify the definition and scope of TCDC.

28. The United Nations Development Fund for Women calls for a more precise definition of content and operational terms. UNCTAD states that a fresh definition should not exclude the TCDC-linked work of international agencies.

C. CONCLUSIONS

29. In the light of his analysis of the organizations' submissions, the Administrator has reached the following conclusions:

(a) Since the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, progress has been made in varying degrees by different organizations of the United Nations development system in promoting and integrating TCDC in their technical cooperation programmes and activities. On a system-wide basis, however, this has been accomplished at a slower pace because of attitudinal, procedural and, to some extent, financial constraints both in developing countries and in the United Nations development system itself.

(b) Several actions need to be taken to deal with the problem. These could include: enhancing awareness of TCDC in the organizations through information, orientation and training activities, strengthening of the organizations' focal points for TCDC; expansion of financing resources for TCDC; review and modification where necessary of the organizations' policies and procedures concerning TCDC; coordinated development of information systems on developing country capacities; and an overall effort to increasingly mainstream TCDC into the programme and project cycles.

(c) To facilitate these actions, the Administrator shares the view that the annual meetings of TCDC focal points of organizations of the United Nations development system should be incorporated into the established framework for inter-organizational coordination under the auspices of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), as recommended by the Second Meeting of Focal Points, held in New York in February 1988. In this connection, he believes that the following actions should be pursued.

(i) A special meeting of TCDC focal points of the organizations, to be convened by early 1992, should be devoted to the preparation of guidelines for the review of policies and procedures in the organizations concerning TCDC.

(ii) These guidelines should be considered by ACC for adoption and for subsequent implementation by the organizations.

(iii) ACC, through the meetings of TCDC focal points of the organizations, should monitor the implementation of the guidelines on a regular basis.

(iv) The Administrator would include in his biennial reports to the High-level Committee, information on any significant problems encountered in the process of implementation of the guidelines by the organizations.

Notes

1/ United Nations Department of Technical Cooperation for Development (DTCD), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), International Labour Organisation (ILO), International Maritime Organization (IMO), United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), United Nations Centre on Human Settlements (Habitat), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations (UNCTC), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), World Food Council (WFC), World Health Organization (WHO), World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

Annex

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE MEETING OF THE GROUP OF GOVERNMENTAL EXPERTS ON THE RULES, REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES OF THE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM CONCERNING TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, HELD IN NEW YORK FROM 9 TO 20 APRIL 1990

Dr. O. Akin Adubifa
Chief Consultant and Consultancy Director
Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER)
Lagos, Nigeria

Mr. Antoni Czarkowski
Deputy Director
Department of International Organizations
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Warsaw, Poland

Mrs. Maria Lucia de Oliveira
Coordinator of TCDC of the Brazilian Cooperation Agency
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Brasilia - DF, Brazil

Mr. Demetrio Bueno Carvalho
Second Secretary of Embassy
Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Ntions
New York
Adviser

Mr. Marian Dinu
First Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Bucharest, Romania

Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaf
Counsellor
Permanent Mission of Algeria to the United Nations
New York

H.E. Dr. Charles Fleming
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative to the United Nations
Permanent Mission of Saint Lucia to the United Nations
New York

Mr. Ausbert d'Auvergne
Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Planning
Saint Lucia
Adviser

Mr. Jorge Garcia
Officer in Charge of TCDC
Cuban State Committee for Economic Collaboration
Havana, Cuba

Mrs. Lamis Hamoudi
Minister Plenipotentiary
Organization Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Baghdad, Iraq

Mr. K. O. Kumi
Principal Secretary
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Accra, Ghana

Mr. Eduardo Praselj
Chairman, Pérez-Guerrero Trust Fund
Manager, Project Analysis
Petroquímica de Venezuela, S.A.
Caracas, Venezuela

Mr. Miljenko Vukovic
Director of Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Belgrade, Yugoslavia

Mr. Dieter Wilke
Department 210
Ministry of Economic Cooperation
Bonn, Germany

Mr. Hamed Zeghal
Director-General
Tunisian Agency for Technical Cooperation (ATCT)
Tunis, Tunisia